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## **American Samoa to Participate in a Supply Chain Study in the Pacific Regions conducted by FEMA**



Directors Lisa Tuato'o of the Office of Disaster Assistance and Petroleum (ODAPM), Faleosina Voigt of the American Samoa Department of Public Works (DPW), and Senior Executive Assistant to the Governor, Aoelua Solomona represented the American Samoa Government (ASG) in an introductory meeting by FEMA with Dewberry contractors at their Headquarters in Washington, D.C. on February 03, 2023. This was to discuss the Logistics Construction Support Contract for Supply Chain Analysis Network or the LCSC-SCAN Pacific Supply Chain Risk & Vulnerability Analysis study to be conducted in American Samoa. Mr. Robert Fenton who is the Region IX Administrator explained that the importance of the study is to better prepare American Samoa for untimely disasters by reviewing the Supply Chain process. He shared that the Supply Chain study will focus on the territory's capabilities to include the private sector, the

overall port systems, researching what the supply chain looks like, how resilient they are, and what are the gaps and vulnerabilities in the process. The Supply Chain Study will be conducted by The SCAN team.

SCAN is contracted by FEMA to “collect and analyze data on the supply chains for FEMA’s Regions 9 & 10 and the FEMA Director of Logistics Management with baseline/Blue Sky assessments of consumer supply chain performance and flows of life-sustaining commodities including food/groceries, potable water, fuel, and general freight, as well as critical enablers of these commodities such as transportation infrastructure, seaports, airports, fuel, electrical power grid, and pipelines. Workforce development to ensure timely response and recovery efforts in rebuilding the Territory was also discussed.

By understanding the blue-sky conditions and vulnerabilities of these consumer supply chains, emergency managers are enabled to facilitate effective and efficient disaster response operations to restore the pre-disaster conditions. As part of this project, supply chain risk and vulnerability analysis information will be collected for the State of Hawaii, the State of Alaska, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Each independent analysis will be tailored to the State or territory and a report will be available in writing at the upcoming Pacific Partnership Meeting (July 2023) in Hawaii” (FEMA).

Director Tuato’o extends her appreciation to Mr. Fenton for “hearing and responding to our Territory’s unique circumstances given American Samoa is geographically separated from the continental United States and all associated challenges in light of it being a containerized community with everything being imported to the islands.” As a Territory with populations dispersed in the outer islands, transportation of commodities, materials and supplies are challenging. “We need to look at it with a whole-community approach not limited to the private sector but also faith-based organizations, to get involved in American Samoa’s state of preparedness”. Director Tuato’o mentioned that there was a discussion with the Department of Interior (DOI) with regard to the Buy American Act to allow American Samoa to buy from the neighboring countries of New Zealand, Australia, or Fiji, etc. as equipment, materials and supplies are mostly costly to acquire and shipped all the way from the mainland United States. American Samoa will work with the SCAN team to collect the data and information they need to complete the study and to provide results that will better prepare American Samoa for disasters. The SCAN team will be visiting the Island to conduct their study in March.

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